



## ST GREGORY'S COLLEGE CAMPBELLTOWN

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20 May 2019

Dear Parent and Carers,

Firstly, thank you for your attendance and support at the interviews last week. Almost 800 family groups made bookings and well over 5000 interviews took place on Friday and Sunday. Your ongoing support of the College was obvious through those numbers. As always, we are looking to improve things and would welcome your feedback on the interview process.

I have written this letter on the eve of the semester examinations. On the back of the feedback from teachers over the weekend I hope you can use the information in this letter in your discussions with your son over the coming days and weeks as they prepare for their examinations. Every student is on a different journey, but they all have an opportunity to demonstrate improvement. The semester examinations are scheduled to start in week 5 and conclude in week 6. Timetables have been issued and copies can be found on Sentral in (Daily Notices) and the Student SkyBlue site.

I have written one letter for all parents and carers in Years 7-10 for the purpose of sharing information. I think it is important to understand and appreciate how the focus changes from year to year on the learning journey. I hope you will gain a little more insight and be able to use the information to help you in your discussion with your son. While examinations are important, the well-being of your son comes first. If, at any time, you have concerns about the examination process impacting significantly on your son, please contact his Year Coordinator. While I state that, it is expected and it is normal, that examinations will place pressure on students. Students will feel the pressure of examinations and one of our tasks is to help them build resilience, as they face these challenges. They should be making sacrifices to find extra time to prepare between now and the examination period.

School can be quite challenging at times, particularly for those that find academic study challenging. There are several support systems in place to support not only those students, but all students at the College. On Monday afternoons, the homework club runs from 3.05pm to 4.30pm in the Marian Centre. Teachers and Support staff are available to help students of all ages, with any aspect of their learning. On Wednesday afternoon, the Mathematics club runs from 3.05pm to 4.25pm. Teachers from the Mathematics department are available to assist all students of all ages.

The College subscribes to the study skills website run by Enhanced Learning Educational Services (ELES). The website has many resources and helpful hints. There are worksheets and modules on many aspects of how students can improve their study skills. An appropriate one for this time of year is titled how to prepare for an examination block. All students have access to the website at [www.studyskillshandbook.com.au](http://www.studyskillshandbook.com.au).

The log in details are: User name: forstgregsonly  
Password: 60results

Of course, one of the simplest, most effective and best ways to prepare for examinations is to make the most of class time. Students are: encouraged to ask questions, are expected to be respectful, to be prepared, to contribute and to stay on task. Students who are not respectful of learning in the classroom will be challenged, and if needed, consequences will be issued to address the behaviour.

Student placement in classes will be assessed after the examinations and students may be moved into a different class. While the result in one single test is only a result at that point in time, the result nevertheless, will be used with other data to ensure students are placed in the most appropriate class. KLA Coordinators will communicate in writing if there are any movements between classes.

For Year 10 students, these examinations are one of the last formal opportunities for students to demonstrate their abilities before the 2020 subject selection process. The information from these examinations and data from previous years will be collated for each student. The data helps form the recommendations that students will receive regarding the courses they should and can study in Year 11 and Year 12. The recommendations are particularly useful in recommending courses in English, Mathematics, Religion, Science, HSIE, PDHPE, Computing, Music and Industrial Arts.

For Year 10 students, the recent Progress Report and upcoming Semester 1 Reports will have information about student work habits. The reports will have statements about student attitude, punctuality, effort, organisation, class participation and course results. These are generally the two reports that are used for students who are not planning to continue in Year 11 and Year 12 and wish to apply for apprenticeships or work. Likewise, the reports are useful when reviewing the applications from students that apply for TAFE and School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships (SBAT). So, the examination period is important for ALL Year 10 students. Information regarding the 2020 subject selection process will be communicated after the examination period.

For Year 9 students, these examinations are important for all courses, but particularly Mathematics and English. Stage 5 Mathematics has different pathways designed to prepare students for the rigour of the different courses in Stage 6. The foundations to study the more challenging courses in senior years are built in the junior years. All students are currently studying either mathematics Pathway 5.3 or 5.2. It may be necessary after the semester exams to create a Pathway 5.1 for students not suited for 5.2. Students in 5.1 are unlikely to be given a recommendation to study Mathematics in Stage 6. All results contribute to the data that is collected and used in the 2021 Year 10 subject selection process.

For Year 8 students, these examinations are important for consolidating the Year 7 results or they are an opportunity to turn things around. They are also one of the last opportunities for students to demonstrate their abilities and work habits before the 2020 Year 9 subject selection process. The results from Year 7 and Year 8 help form the basis for recommendations on the elective courses for 2020. It is also one of the last opportunities for students to demonstrate their ability in Mathematics before students are split into different pathways in Year 9 and Year 10. Students who are not in the Pathway 5.3 (Highest Level in Stage 5) in Year 9 and Year 10 are unlikely to obtain a recommendation to study Mathematics in Year 11. Information regarding the 2020 subject selection process will be communicated after the examination period.

For Year 7 students, it is an opportunity to consolidate the start or an opportunity to get serious for those that have had a slow start. It can be daunting to face several examinations in the space of only a few days. Students are encouraged to use the study skills website for tips and suggestions or seek advice from their teachers.

It is expected that students attend all their scheduled examinations. Parents are asked to support the College by not organising leave during the exam periods. Leave without satisfactory documentation will result in a zero mark for the task. Catch up tasks will not be organised for students that do not have satisfactory documentation. Satisfactory documentation for missing an exam includes:

- Medical documentation from a GP. (Hand in to the Year Coordinator on the first day back).
- Endorsed Leave from the College Principal. Non-endorsed leave will result in a zero mark for any exams that students do not sit.
- Satisfactory documentation for severe personal or family hardship. Please contact the Year Coordinator as soon as it is known that an issue will affect your son sitting his examinations.

If there are questions about the details in this letter, please contact me at [barry.graham@stgregs.nsw.edu.au](mailto:barry.graham@stgregs.nsw.edu.au).

I look forward to challenging our students to find the best in themselves, so they can be the best version of themselves.

Yours sincerely,



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Director of Studies

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